

IV. REMARKS

In the Office Action, requirement was made for a new declaration making reference to the provisional application for the claim of priority in the provisional application. The declaration is enclosed herewith.

Requirement was made for updating the continuing data of the application referenced at the first paragraph of the specification. The paragraph has been amended by this response to show the updated information.

Typographical errors were noted by the examiner in two paragraphs of the specification. These two paragraphs are corrected in this response by adopting the suggestions of the examiner. A further typographical error has also been corrected.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Wright (US 3,802,218) for reasons set forth in the Action.

In order to overcome the foregoing rejection of the claims, further features of the present invention have been inserted by amendment into claims 1 and 2 so as to distinguish the invention from the teachings of the cited art. These inventive features are disclosed in the Summary of the Invention, and in the last few paragraphs of the disclosure of the present specification. These inventive features relate to the use of a secure communications system for transmitting programming instructions to the computer from a source of the instructions at a central location distant from numerous ones of the metering devices employing the invention. In the construction of the metering

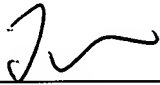
device, the computer is constructed of a field programmable gate array (FPGA) enabling alteration of encryption circuitry of the computer by software controlling the FPGA. The FPGA is configurable with software provided securely from the remote source by the communications system. In this way the operation of individual ones of the metering devices, such as a multiplicity of metering devices of the Postal Service, can be automatically and securely upgraded without intervention on the part of the users of the individual metering devices.

It is believed that this aspect of the present invention is not taught in the cited art and, accordingly, the amendment of the claims has overcome the foregoing grounds of rejection to obtain allowable subject matter in the claims.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,



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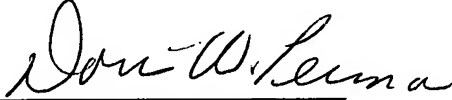
2/25/05
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